New Nouveau Brunswick
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Regional Conference Report

Region 3 – Central NB

Royal Canadian Legion - Nackawic

Community Non-Profit Organizations Secretariat
February 21, 2009

Regional Conference Report

Region 3
Royal Canadian Legion, Nackawic
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It was a pleasure to meet people representing non-profit organizations in central New Brunswick. Many good suggestions were brought forward for implementing our strategic plan to support the non-profit sector in our province. I was motivated by the strong desire for organizations to be mission-driven, with the government on side as a partner in financial support and policy development. I recognize that many non-profits are working in isolation with limited financial or human resources at their disposal. This conference was an excellent start to building partnerships within their sector and with government, to sustain and strengthen their abilities to build communities at the grassroots level, resulting in a more self-sufficient province.

Brian Kenny
Minister responsible for the
Community Non-Profit Organizations Secretariat

Document Outline:

Turning Point Conclusions
Strategic Plan

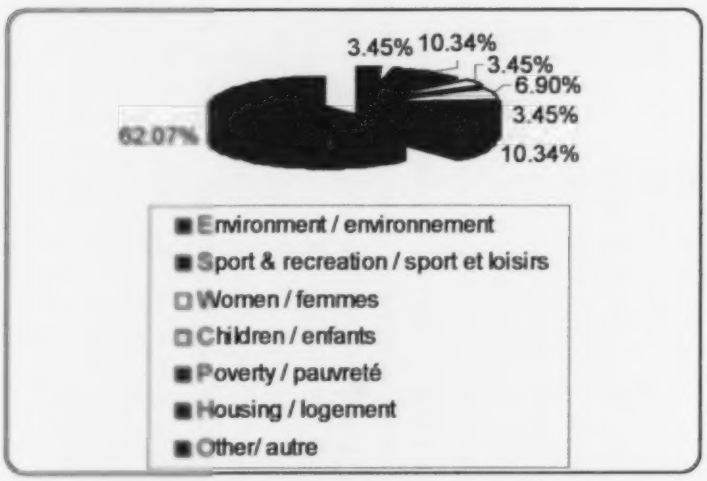
- Funding and Administrative Burden
- Respect and Recognition
- Fostering a Culture of Volunteering
- Revitalizing the Partnership

Questions
NB Volunteer Mentors Pilot – Central Region
Discussion Notes
Comments / Priorities
List of Attendees

Turning Point Conclusions

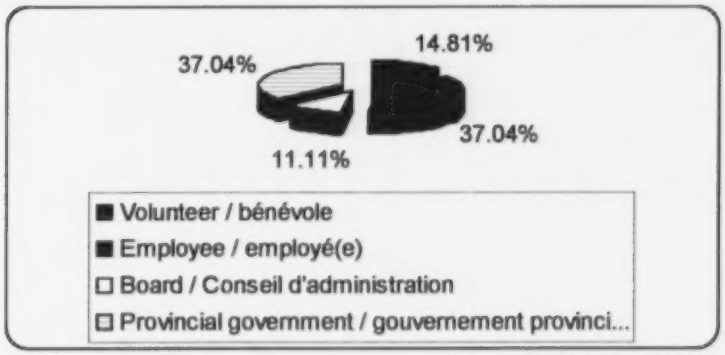
(Using electronic voting devices the audience answered the following questions during the conference. These results were shared with the audience after each question)

1.) What sector do your work with? Dans quel secteur travaillez-vous ?	Responses	
Environment / environnement	1	3.45%
Sport & recreation / sport et loisirs	3	10.34%
Women / femmes	1	3.45%
Children / enfants	2	6.90%
Poverty / pauvreté	1	3.45%
Housing / logement	3	10.34%
Other/ autre	18	62.07%
Totals	**29**	**100%**



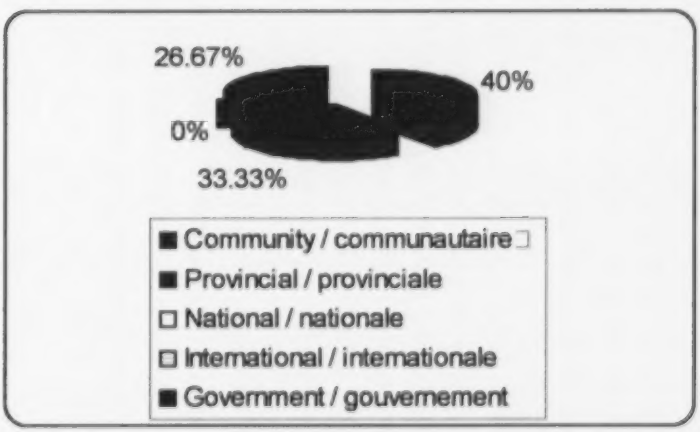
(Note: Many participants at the conference felt that their mandate fell in more than one category and therefore chose "other".)

2.) Who am I? Qui suis-je ?	Responses	
Volunteer / bénévole	4	14.81%
Employee / employé(e)	10	37.04%
Board / Conseil d'administration	3	11.11%
Provincial government / gouvernement provinci...	10	37.04%
Totals	**27**	**100%**



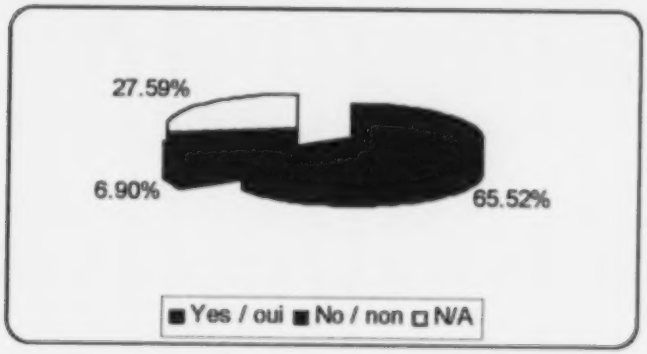
(Note: This conference has a disproportionately high number of government officials which could be attributed to the fact the conference was close to the Fredericton area.)

3.) Mandate of organization Mandat de l'organisme	Responses	
Community / communautaire	12	40%
Provincial / provinciale	10	33.33%
National / nationale	0	0%
International / internationale	0	0%
Government / gouvernement	8	26.67%
Totals	**30**	**100%**



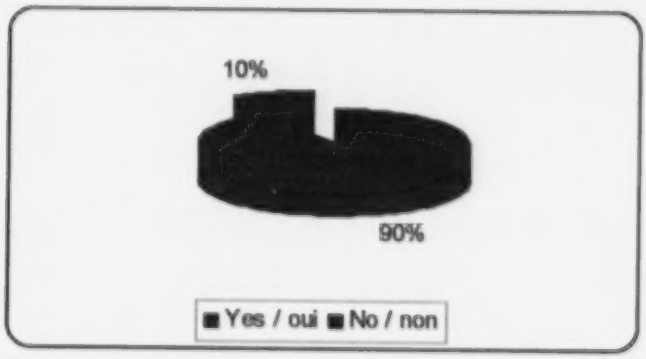
4.) Is your organization incorporated?
Est-ce que votre organisme est incorporé ?

	Responses	
Yes / oui	19	65.52%
No / non	2	6.90%
N/A	8	27.59%
Totals	**29**	**100%**



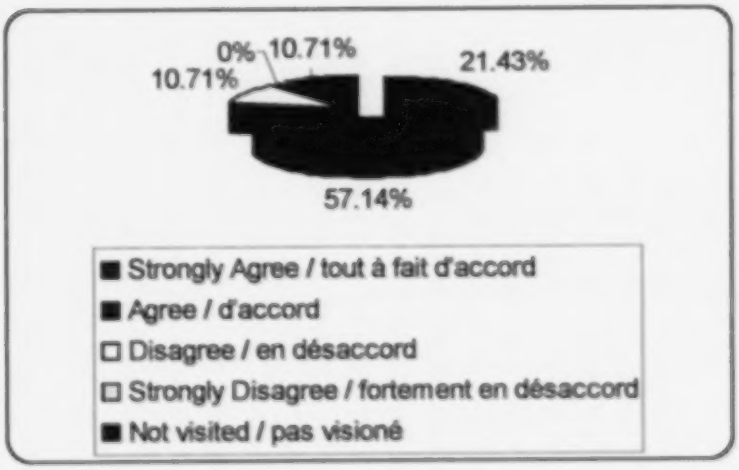
5.) Have you visited our website?
Avez-vous visité notre site Web ?

	Responses	
Yes / oui	27	90%
No / non	3	10%
Totals	**30**	**100%**



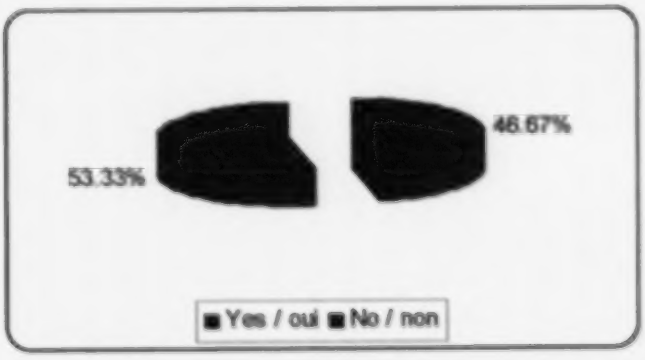
6.) The website was useful
Le site Web est utile

	Responses	
Strongly Agree / tout à fait d'accord	6	21.43%
Agree / d'accord	16	57.14%
Disagree / en désaccord	3	10.71%
Strongly Disagree / fortement en désaccord	0	0%
Not visited / pas visioné	3	10.71%
Totals	**28**	**100%**



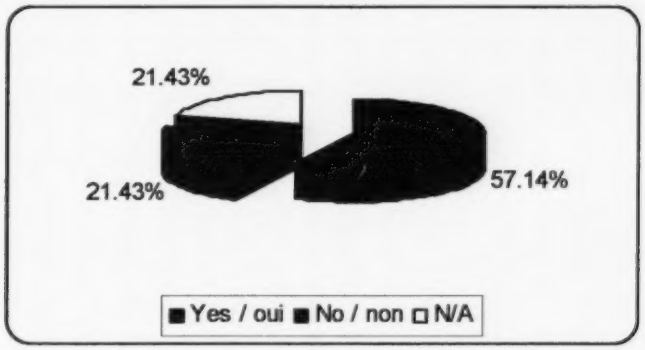
7.) Do you receive our newsletter?
Recevez-vous notre bulletin de nouvelle ?

	Responses	
Yes / oui	14	46.67%
No / non	16	53.33%
Totals	**30**	**100%**



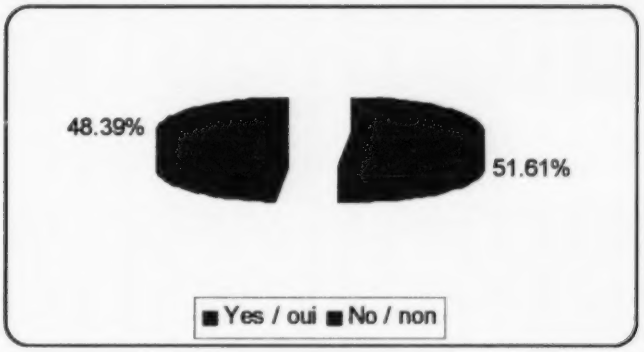
8.) Is your organization registered in our database? Est-ce que votre organisme est inscrit dans notre base de donnée ?

	Responses	
Yes / oui	16	57.14%
No / non	6	21.43%
N/A	6	21.43%
Totals	**28**	**100%**



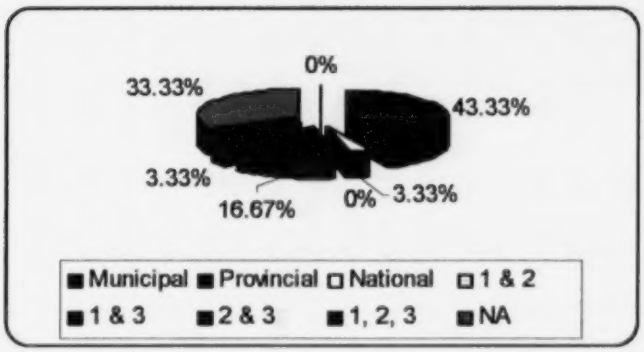
9.) Did you take part in the Task Force consultations in 2007? Avez-vous participé aux consultations avec le groupe d'étude en 2007 ?

	Responses	
Yes / oui	16	51.61%
No / non	15	48.39%
Totals	**31**	**100%**



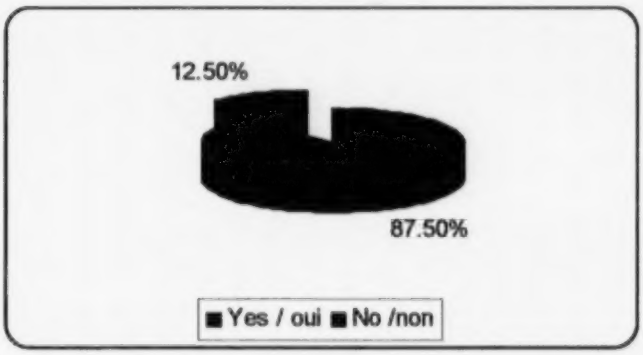
10.) My organization receives funding from:
Mon organisme reçoit du financement de :

	Responses	
Municipal	0	0%
Provincial	13	43.33%
National	1	3.33%
1 & 2	0	0%
1 & 3	0	0%
2 & 3	5	16.67%
1, 2, 3	1	3.33%
NA	10	33.33%
Totals	**30**	**100%**

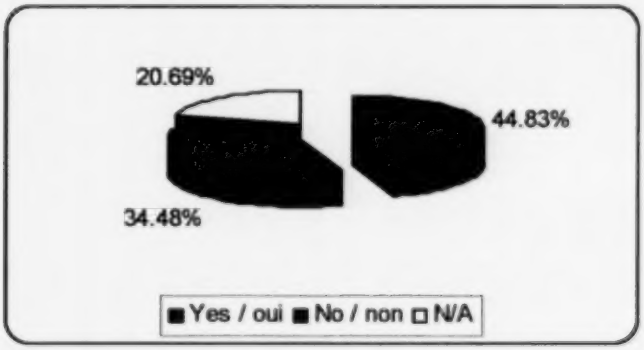


11.) Have you read the *Delivering on the Blueprint*?
Avez-vous lu Exécuter le plan d'action ?

	Responses	
Yes / oui	28	87.50%
No /non	4	12.50%
Totals	**32**	**100%**



12.) Does your organization / department offer training for non-profit organizations? Est-ce que votre organisme / ministère offre de la formation aux organismes sans but lucratif ?	Responses	
Yes / oui	13	44.83%
No / non	10	34.48%
N/A	6	20.69%
Totals	**29**	**100%**



Strategic Plan

Group discussion took place during the conference to provide an opportunity for the participants to provide feedback on the strategic plan. The following questions and suggestions were discussed.

Questions

Funding and Administrative Burden

Q. *What is the progress of the commitment for multi-year funding?*

A. A working group (topic table) was established for this issue. The Chair of this committee, Fleurette Landry, has solicited input from interested non-profit organizations and has gathered this information together. At the same time, the Secretariat started conversations with government departments around the details of multi-year funding. The information gathered from the Topic Table and the government departments is being collected to develop a document to be presented to Cabinet. All affected departments and the Secretariat worked on identifying eligible non-profit organizations for the multi-year funding.

Q. *What are the criteria for participating in the multi-year funding?*

A. Departments will be using the record of performance that already exists for non-profit organizations. If an organization has received funding from the Government over the last few years, has demonstrated financial accountability, and has good governance the non-profit organization may be eligible for the multi-year funding agreement. This fiscal year's funding will be used as the basis for negotiating these arrangements. These will need to be done on a department by department basis. The document references a five year funding agreement, however there will be some flexibility as three years may make more sense for some organizations and Departments.

Respect and Recognition

Q. *Does the N.B. government regard the establishment and mandate of the Secretariat as a priority?*

A. Premier Graham appointed Mrs. Bradshaw to a taskforce mandated to tour the communities of New Brunswick. After the release of the Blueprint for Action the Premier appointed a Minister responsible for the Secretariat. In March 2008 the government released it's report *Delivering on the Blueprint*. The staff of the Secretariat is very committed to the work and we are working hard to make changes for the sector. Where some priorities are the responsibilities of other departments the Secretariat is working in collaboration with them to see the changes take place.

Q. *In reference to the items referred to the Tax Review Committee - will Non-Profit Organizations be consulted as partners?*

A. In June the government announced that the Select Committee for Tax Review would be holding public hearings across the province. The Deputy Minister sat down with the chair of the committee, Roly McIntyre, to discuss the committee and their role in reviewing recommendations made within the government's response document *Delivering on the Blueprint*. The many organizations that want to comment on the policy itself were welcome to come to the regional meetings and make a presentation before the committee. The opportunity to submit a written brief was also available until August 1st, 2008. The Secretariat submitted a letter to the Select Committee outlining the taxations issues raised in the *Blueprint for Action*. Now that the Select Committee on Tax Review has tabled their final report *Building a Better Tax System*, the Secretariat will review and begin moving forward on next steps as to taxation. We will engage both the sector and Advisory Committee in this process.

Q. *The Central Region you have identified is quite large. Is it possible for the region to be broken down into smaller areas?*

A. This is a comment that has been brought forward before during other regional conferences. It is a discussion we will continue to have and a matter that will be

addressed with our Advisory Committee members. One option being considered is to host smaller conferences in several parts of the regions.

Fostering a Culture of Volunteering

Q. *There is a need to increase awareness and the value of volunteering in the province, especially with an emphasis on youth. How can the Secretariat help?*
A. The need to create more awareness of volunteerism was strongly recommended. The Secretariat has met with Communications NB to investigate the possibility of a campaign. The Secretariat's Advisory Committee will be consulted. The Population Growth Secretariat has developed a Youth Engagement Fund to help support retaining Youth within our Province by engaging them to become active participants in their community.

Q. *The sector needs qualified volunteers, technological resources, and funding for technology courses. The sector also needs people and resources for training.*
A. Access to professional development was highlighted in the *Blueprint for Action*. Several organizations throughout New Brunswick offer different training programs. In our November newsletter a request for information was made to organizations that offer training to volunteers. We are evaluating the information collected and will consider how we could provide these training opportunities on our website. We have also met with the Department of Human Resources to discuss government training programs being opened to the sector. We will be surveying the database to determine the types of programs the sector is interested in participating in and what the sector currently offers.

Revitalizing the Partnership

Q. *How is the structure and opportunity for dialogue going to be organized?*
A. One good opportunity for dialogue between the Non-Profit Sector and Government is going to be the regional conferences. At each conference we will be seeking the Non-Profit Sector's feedback and input; these are an opportunity for the sector to let the Secretariat know what it can improve. The Secretariat wants to take our cues from the sector. It is a point of contact for volunteers and the Non-Profit Sector to Government.

Q. *How is Government going to prioritize Delivering on the Blueprint and what steps are going to take place? How and when will the non-Profit Sector be notified about the work that has been done on specific recommendations?*
A. The Secretariat will be hosting annual regional conferences in each of the seven regions of the province. It will be reporting on the progress at each conference. The Secretariat will also be providing an annual report to update people on the progress

of each recommendation and reporting on the overall progress. The regional conferences are a tool for the Non-Profit Sector to inform the Secretariat of the Non-Profit Sector's priorities.

Q. *How did the Secretariat go from the Blueprint for Action to Delivering on the Blueprint and then the Strategic Plan? How did you decide which goals to focus on first?*

A. The Secretariat met individually with each department within government to discuss the recommendations that impacted them respectively and to begin the discussion on how and where we could move forward on these recommendations. We have worked closely with two of the co-authors of the *Blueprint for Action*, Sue Rickards and Fleurette Landry. They have helped us prioritize the recommendations based on the meetings they attended with the Task Force. Some of these recommendations where heard over and over, and some others were only brought forward by a few people. Overall, the Secretariat is trying to be flexible with priorities, as answers or possible solutions are unveiled or developed we will move it forward.

Q. *The Blueprint for Action recommended regional positions for the secretariat but it was this not agreed to in Delivering on the Blueprint. What is the Secretariat doing to assist the regions?*

A. Although regional outreach will be an activity of the Secretariat, it is a much smaller organization than envisioned in the *Blueprint for Action*. However, organizations evolve over time and there will be an opportunity to revisit the agency concept in the future. At this point in time the Secretariat is acting as a facilitator for the regions in NB that don't already have a network established. We are there to start the process of getting together. Our Advisory Committee will also be available as a regional presence in the operations of the Secretariat. They will act as the voice of their region when considering policy decisions and direction. More importantly, they will be a point of contact for the regions, in the regions, for the Secretariat.

Questions

These questions were raised during discussion at the conference on the evaluation sheets, and on comment sheets during round table discussions.

Q. *Could you provide clarification on why a review for funding for food banks has been specified as one of your strategic goals?*

A. One of the recommendations made to the Taskforce was "that the formula for allocating funding to food banks be adjusted to meet the regional needs of the hungry. " (*Blueprint for Action, p. 37*) In *Delivering on the Blueprint*, (p. 15) the government committed that the Secretariat would lead a consultative process with

the Department of Social Development and partner Non-Profit Organizations to review current policies in this area in order to ensure that the funding for food banks is equitable across New Brunswick.

NB Volunteer Mentors Pilot – Central Region

Background: A group of local volunteers recognized a strong need within the Non-Profit Sector for assistance and mentorship in the operations of their organizations. This group formed a Steering Group that will offer and manage a pilot project called *NB Volunteer Mentors* within the Central Region[1] . The pilot will provide an avenue for Volunteer Mentors to provide assistance to any Non-Profit Organization (NPO) in need, at no cost to the NPO. The pilot will run from April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010.

This project is a work in progress and can be adapted to assist any NPO. The intention is to eventually create a permanent program and possibly expand the project to other regions.

Who is a Volunteer Mentor? A person who has skills which can be applied to assist an NPO in need in the areas of governance, administration, or operation, and who has applied in confidence to the Steering Group to offer his/her skills.

Non-Profit Organization requiring assistance: Any NPO in the Central Region 3 whose Board and/or Executive Director wishes to seek assistance can apply in confidence for assistance to the Steering Group. Presently, mentorship is available in the following areas:

1. Governance (Incorporation, By- Laws, Officers, Committee Functions, Board policies);
2. Administration (Implement Board Policies, Accounting, Human Resources, Policy development)
3. Operation (project management, lobbying/advocacy, proposal/grant writing, fundraising, day-to-day work being done, field work)

Steering Committee: Membership on this committee includes volunteers: George Piers; Frank Russell; Simon Mitchell; Valerie Hillier and Ephie Carrier. As we are volunteers operating within an informal structure, the Community Non-Profit Organizations Secretariat has agreed to be a contact point for this pilot.

How to apply: Both Volunteer Mentors and NPOs requiring assistance may complete an application form and submit the request to the Community Non-Profit Organizations Secretariat. You can contact them via email at: Info.nonprofitsector@gnb.ca or by

telephone 1-888-295-4545. All applications will then be forwarded to the Steering Group for their action.

[1] The Central Region (Region 3) spans from Plaster Rock to Fredericton to Doaktown. See a detailed map online at www.gnb.ca/volunteer

Discussion Notes

- Suggestions for things that could be done in-kind by the government: Telephone rate sharing; Pension plan – under government umbrella for management; In-kind contributions (not more $$).

- We had a lot of discussion around challenges in rural areas. Challenges like transportation. This is the biggest barrier to accessing services and recruiting volunteers.

- Great discussion/networking opportunity. Action plans begin with communication and discussion of the issues. Beginnings of an action plan.

- Networking creates opportunities to get to know your neighbour. Even though you live next door, you had never met. Last thing we need to is talk in silos. This was an opportunity to discuss sector issues.

- The *Blueprint for Action* asked for government to review everything that has to do with sector. The sector needs to look at the sector. We have duplication of services and competition for dollars. We need to consider our mission and mandate first and raising money second. We need to envision the sector as thriving in the province. We exist to meet needs. The best thing we could ask for is to be put out of business as the need is no longer there. I would suggest that the government budgetary process should let the non-profits handle the money. We know how to balance budgets and raise money. When policy and legislation impacts directly on the non-profit sector we are not consulted or considered. The Deputy or Minister needs to put the charge to departments to make sure they engage the sector before policy is enacted.

- Navigating the government is a maze to the sector. Governments are large and the number of programs they are involved in is vast. We would be simply minded if we were to think of it as simple. We have great difficulties in maneuvering through this maze.

- The Secretariat was an idea in the task force just a few months ago, and now it is a strategic plan. We have 10 priorities – that in itself is closer to action. Some things are ready in the plan, even if they have not moved, they are close.

- Demonstrate respect for the non-profit sector. Insurance rate and phone rates are a priority. Government has enough money and spends enough – job is to spend it in the right ways.

Comments/Priorities

The following feedback was recorded by participants on comment sheets during the conference

- Multi-year funding is very important.
- Retention of surplus. If an organization is efficient and doesn't spend all it's money. It doesn't desire to have it clawed back the next year.
- Insurance
- Professional development
- Communications and information sharing
- Networking opportunities
- Nova Scotia's Societies Act is more tailored to a non-profit organization than NB's Companies Act.
- Strategic plan is still a large document hard to get your head around. You need to focus on two or three very important things instead of working on several things and only moving them along a little way. You can get 15% there with 20 things, or 100% there with 2 or 3.
- Allow us the independence. We rely on the government so much that sometimes they influence us in their direction. We need to stand firm on our ideas.
- Don't bite the hand that feeds you. Work with them, not against them. Avoid conflict. Through the secretariat we can vent our concerns, feel comfortable, and this would not impact our funding in the future.
- Government needs to take time to see where the dollars are spent. They should be putting the money where it is needed, where it is a priority. Health and safety needs to come first. We need to take care of our community.
- Retention of volunteers is an issue. We need support – pensions, benefits, help to eliminate burn-out, etc.
- We need regional networks to help with regional communication.
- Economic downturn often leads to increase in need for services (often provided by NGO's). This is the time to invest in social programs (Tax reforms: charitable benefits for business; Charitable receipts for volunteer time; Charitable tax receipts should provide same benefit as political contribution.)
- Help organizations to work together, help with partnerships. Help with financial stability in the big picture.
- Professional/Development
- Communication: when government training is taking place have available spaces for non-profits posted.
- Existing contracts with government should include realistic training dollars.

- CNPOS could organize presentations on government funding sources, to explain programs and possible fits. This would also help NPO's navigate through government.
- Access to Resources - establish a "lending library" through the internet
- Affordable insurance
- Phone rates
- Communication and information sharing

List of Attendees

Carleton Victoria Community Vocational Board Inc.	Kim Bulmer-Thibodeau
Carleton Victoria Community Vocational Board Inc.	Janet Gee
Chimo Helpline	Jill Fraser
Communications New Brunswick	Judy Cole
Department of Education (District 14 Community Schools Coordinator)	Valerie Carmichael
Department of Post Secondary Education Training & Labour	Diane Martin
Department of Post-Secondary Education Training & Labour	Patrick Murphy
Department of Public Safety	Mario St-Pierre
Department of Public Safety	Shannon Myers
Department of Social Development	Mary Astle
Department of Wellness, Culture and Sport	Sherry Doiron
Fondation MURCAR Foundation Inc	Ephrem J. Carrier
Fredericton Boys and Girls Club	Karen MacAlpine
Fredericton Legion Track Club	Germain Landry
GNB - Women's Issues Branch / Executive Council Office	Lindsay Manuel
Healthy Eating Physical Activity Coalition of NB	Nora Dickson
Hockey New Brunswick	Beverley Jacobson
Jobs Unlimited Inc.	Abdel Belhadjsalah
Millville Youth Recreation Centre Inc	Sandra Clark
Nackawic Fire Department	William Hawkins
NANY	Sue Rickards
NB Non-profit Housing Association	Alex Arseneau
NB Non-profit Housing Association	Gary Glauser
NB Volunteer Mentor Pilot	Simon Mitchell
NBARA	Lorri deJong
New Brunswick Federation of Home and School Associations, Inc.	Glyn Morgan

New Brunswick Multicultural Council Inc.	Gloria Brazeau-Schiebel
Partners for Youth	John Sharpe
Partners for Youth	Ric Cuthbertson
Partners for Youth	Tara Steeves
Stepping Stone Senior Centre	Roy Cantle
Sure Life Assembly	Reverand Paul Leger
Upper Valley Autism Resource	Penny Martin
Volunteer Family Services Inc.	Gerald Gavel
Youth in Transition - Chrysalis House	Julie Gallant